

together to build one of the world's premier trails—the Tahoe Rim Trail. This Saturday, the association will hold a Silver Anniversary Celebration to honor this occasion, and I am pleased to acknowledge their efforts here today.

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association is a successful public-private partnership that was founded in 1981. The original idea was to bring together community leaders, volunteers, and government agencies such as the Forest Service and the Nevada Division of State Parks to establish a trail around the Lake Tahoe Basin. Working hand-in-hand, volunteers created the incredible 165-mile trail that now exists around Lake Tahoe, allowing visitors a new way to experience one of the most magnificent places in America.

Visitors to the Tahoe Rim Trail are struck by the incredible diversity of the landscape and the wealth of wildlife. From the wildflowers of our alpine meadows to the soaring mountain peaks of the Sierra Nevada, the Tahoe Rim Trail offers something for everyone. Visitors to the trail enjoy a diverse range of opportunities from hiking and backpacking to horseback riding and mountain biking. Portions of the trail are also handicapped accessible so that everyone may enjoy this important piece of our State's rich natural heritage.

Although the trail is now complete, the Tahoe Rim Trail Association continues to educate visitors about the trail. Every Tuesday and Saturday during the summer months, the association organizes a group of volunteers to maintain and enhance the trail. These important efforts and community partnerships ensure that Nevadans, Californians, and people from around the world will be able to enjoy the beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin for generations to come.

I am pleased to recognize the 25th anniversary of the Tahoe Rim Trail Association, and I hope that all of my colleagues will have the opportunity to visit this incredible part of Nevada.

16TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, today, July 26, marks the 16th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

On this 16th anniversary, we celebrate one of the great, landmark civil rights laws of the 20th century—a long-overdue emancipation proclamation for people with disabilities.

We also celebrate the men and women, from all across America, whose daily acts of protest and persistence and courage moved this law forward to passage 16 years ago.

We celebrate some 50 million Americans with disabilities, who now begin each day with the right to equal opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency.

That is the triumph we celebrate today.

That is the spirit that made the Americans with Disabilities Act possible.

And that is the promise that will continue to move this country and the disability community forward.

Our society is so dynamic and so rapidly changing, we are often oblivious to quiet revolutions taking place in our midst. One such a revolution has been unfolding since the Americans with Disabilities Act became law 16 years ago.

How soon we forget that, prior to the ADA, Americans with disabilities routinely faced prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion—not to mention physical barriers to movement and access in their everyday lives. People with disabilities faced blatant discrimination in the workplace. They were often denied employment, no matter how well qualified they were. People in wheelchairs faced a nearly impossible obstacle course of curbs, stairs, and narrow doors.

One of those courageous people who fought for passage of the ADA was a young Iowan with severe cerebral palsy named Danette Crawford. I remember vividly when I first met Danette in 1990, when I was making the final push to get ADA through Congress. She was just 14 and one of the brightest persons I had ever met. I talked to her about what ADA would mean to her in terms of educational and job opportunities—ensuring that she would not be discriminated against in the workplace.

She listened to all this, and in her wonderful way, she said: "That's very nice, very important, Senator. But, you know, all I really want to do is just be able to go out and buy a pair of shoes just like anybody else." And, of course, she was right. That is exactly what the ADA is all about.

The reach—the triumph—of the ADA revolution is all around us. It has become part of America. In May, I attended a convention in downtown Washington of several hundred disability rights advocates, many with severe impairments. They arrived on trains and airplanes built to accommodate people in wheelchairs. They came to the hotel on Metro and in regular busses, all seamlessly accessible by wheelchair. They navigated city streets equipped with curb cuts and ramps. The hotel where the convention took place was equipped in countless ways to accommodate people with disabilities. A woman on the dais translated the speeches into sign language so that people with hearing disabilities could be full participants.

For those of us who are able-bodied, these many changes are all but invisible. For a person who uses a wheelchair, they are transforming and liberating. So are provisions in the ADA outlawing discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities in the workplace and requiring employers to provide "reasonable accommodations."

Just as important, the ADA has changed attitudes. It used to be perfectly acceptable to treat people with disabilities as second-class citizens, to exclude and marginalize them. I remember my brother, Frank, who was deaf. Frank was the real inspiration behind all of my work in the Senate on the Americans with Disabilities Act. He passed away 6 years ago, a month before the 10th anniversary of ADA. He always said that he was sorry that the ADA was not there for him when he was growing up but that he was very happy that the ADA is here now for young people so they can have a better future.

Frank lost his hearing at an early age. Then he was taken from his home, his family and his community and sent across the State to the Iowa State School for the Deaf. People often referred to it as the school for the "deaf and dumb." Yes, that is the insensitive way that people used to talk. I remember my brother telling me, "I may be deaf, but I am not dumb."

While at school, Frank was told he could be one of three things: a cobbler, a printer's assistant, or a baker. He said he didn't want to be any one of those things. They said: OK, you are going to be a baker. So after he got out of school, Frank became a baker. But that is not what he wanted to do. Frank stubbornly refused to accept the biases and stereotypes that society tried to impose on him. He fought for—and won—a life of dignity.

But I remember how difficult everyday tasks were for him. For example, I remember, as a young boy, going with my older brother Frank to a store. The salesperson, when she found out that Frank was deaf, looked through him like he was invisible and turned to me to ask me what he wanted. I remember when he wanted to get a driver's license, he was told that "deaf people don't drive." So the deck was stacked against Frank in a thousand ways, strictly because he was a person with a disability.

I remember when my brother finally found a job to his liking. He got a job at a manufacturing plant in Des Moines—a good job at Delavan Corporation. Mr. Delavan decided he wanted to hire people with disabilities, and so my brother went to work there. It was a great job. He became a drill press operator making nozzles for jet engines. He took enormous pride in his work.

Later on, when I was in the Navy, I remember coming home on leave for Christmas. I was unmarried at the time, as was Frank. So I went with him to the company where he worked, which was putting on a Christmas dinner. I didn't expect anything special. But it turned out that they were honoring Frank that night because in 10 years at Delavan, he had not missed a single day of work and hadn't been late once.

That is characteristic of how hard-working and dedicated people with disabilities are when they are given a

chance in the workplace. Frank worked at that plant for 23 years and missed just 3 days of work, and that was because of a blizzard.

Today the brazen discrimination and prejudice that Frank faced are part of what seems like a medieval past. We have overcome the false dichotomy between "disabled" and "able." We recognize that people with disabilities—like all people—have unique abilities, talents, and aptitudes and that America is better, fairer, and richer when we make full use of those gifts.

We have made amazing progress in just 16 years. For millions of Americans with disabilities, it truly is a revolution. It has been a quiet revolution, but it has also been a profound revolution.

The day that the ADA passed was the proudest day of my legislative career. But every Senator who voted "aye" can look back, 16 years later, with enormous pride in this achievement. We were present at the creation. But our creation now has a robust life of its own. The ADA has been integrated into the fabric of American life. It has changed lives—and changed our Nation. It has made the American Dream possible for tens of millions of people who used to be trapped in a nightmare of prejudice and exclusion. This truly is a triumph.

I am reluctant, in any way, to take away from the celebration of this anniversary, but I am obliged to point out that the ADA revolution is not yet complete.

When we passed the ADA, we set four great national goals for Americans with disabilities: equal opportunity, independent living, full participation, and economic self-sufficiency. There is more work that needs to be done to reach the full promise of these goals.

Right now, 16 years after the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, it is a shocking fact that more than 60 percent of people with disabilities are not employed. We need to do a better job of ensuring that people with disabilities have job opportunities—and not just any job but one that is equal to their interests and talents and pays accordingly.

We need to make sure that people with disabilities have access to health care, with accessible medical equipment and properly trained medical professionals. We also need to make sure that they have access to health and wellness programs that focus on their unique needs. Just this week, I introduced a bill—S. 3717—that will go a long way toward accomplishing these goals.

At the same time, we need to continue our progress in reversing the institutional bias in Medicaid. We need to move away from the days when two-thirds of Medicaid long-term-care dollars are spent on institutional services, with only one-third going to community-based care.

My bill, S. 401, also known as MiCASSA—which is short for the Medicaid Community-Based Attendant Services and Supports Act—would level

the playing field by requiring States to cover community services under their Medicaid Programs.

With appropriate community-based services and supports, we can transform the lives of people with disabilities. They can live with family and friends, not strangers. They can be the neighbor down the street, not the person warehoused down the hall. This is not asking too much. This is the bare minimum that we should demand for every human being.

The ADA is to people with disabilities what the Emancipation Proclamation was to African-Americans. But one of the great shames of American history is that it took a full century from the Emancipation Proclamation until the Civil Rights Act actually made good on Lincoln's promise.

I say to my colleagues, we cannot allow history to repeat itself. We cannot wait a century for people with disabilities to be fully integrated into our society and our workforce. We need to fulfill the full promise of the ADA now.

Yes, it takes money to pay for personal attendant services. But I think of my nephew, Kelly, who became a paraplegic while serving in the military. The Veterans Administration pays for his attendant services. This allows Kelly to get up in the morning, go to work, operate his small business, pay his taxes, and be a fully contributing member of our society.

That is what every person with a disability wants. The costs of MiCASSA would be largely offset by the benefit of having people with disabilities who are employed, paying taxes, and contributing to the economy.

It is a disgrace that, as I said, more than 60 percent of people with disabilities do not have jobs. Right now, they are unemployed and dependent. We want them employed and independent. This would be a boon for them. It would be a boon for the economy. And it would be a boon for the budget.

So I cannot think of a better way to celebrate the 16th anniversary of the ADA than by rededicating ourselves to completing the ADA revolution. This means passing MiCASSA. This means passing the Promoting Wellness for Individuals with Disabilities Act. It means giving people with disabilities not just the right to be independent and have a job but the wherewithal to be independent and hold a job.

Mr. President, one final thought: In sign language, there is a wonderful sign for the word "America." It is this: all the fingers in one hand joined tightly together, with the other hand tracing a circle around the joined fingers. This describes an America for all, where we are not separate, where no one is left out, and we are all embraced by a circle, the circle of the American family.

For centuries, Americans with disabilities were tragically left out of that circle. Our American family was not yet whole, not yet fully inclusive. The passage of the ADA 16 years ago rectified that. It brought everyone, including people with disabilities, into the circle. It made our American family—at last—complete.

That is the historic achievement we celebrate today. That is the historic achievement that we must safeguard for generations to come. One America. One inclusive American family that respects the dignity, the value, and the civil rights of all, including Americans with disabilities.

SCHIP AT 10: A DECADE OF COVERING CHILDREN

Mr. CHAFEE. Mr. President, I am pleased to commend the Finance Committee and Senators HATCH and ROCKEFELLER for holding a hearing on the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP. This program has meant a decade of health care coverage for millions of low-income children who would otherwise be uninsured.

My interest and commitment to the success of the SCHIP program goes back to its inception. My father, the late Senator John H. Chafee, along with Senator ROCKEFELLER, designed and introduced S. 674, the Children's Health Insurance Provides Security, CHIPS, Act on April 30, 1997. With help from a bipartisan coalition of Members, including Senators HATCH and KENNEDY, this effort came to fruition later that year when Congress approved the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP.

When SCHIP was introduced there were 10 million uninsured children in the United States including 3 million who were eligible for Medicaid but were not enrolled. The SCHIP program sought to alleviate this unmet need by offering States additional Federal funds if they provided Medicaid coverage to children from families whose income was under 150 percent of the Federal poverty level. This would mean coverage for a family of four earning \$30,000 per year. The bill also provided grant funds for States to reach out and enroll eligible children.

Although some States were slow to implement their programs, to date all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the 5 territories have SCHIP programs in operation. The SCHIP program has been a tremendous success; the share of uninsured children has dropped from 23 percent to 15 percent of the population since 1997. Today, more than 4 million low-income children who would otherwise be uninsured have access to doctors, immunizations, and preventative health care through SCHIP. Since 1997, enrollment has steadily increased to the point that 6.2 million children are currently covered.

Rhode Island's program has also been a success story. Since the program began on October 1, 1997, that State has enrolled 25,573 uninsured children. The State has also expanded its income eligibility requirement to cover additional low-income families. One reason for this great success is the SCHIP program's flexibility in benefit structure